development of urban and rural consumer cooperatives have since been transferred to the State Sector from the financial year 1993-94 onwards. Provisions will, be made for development of these schemes under the State Sector Plan. The 39,800 and odd consumer cooperative outlets in urban areas and 52000 or more village level cooperatives cover only 2% of the distributive consumer trade. In Eighth Five Year Plan it is proposed to increase the coverage to 3% of total distributive trade.

Tax reliefs on vegetable oils

3614. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the vanaspati industry has asked for tax reliefs for vegetable oils;

(b) whether Government are aware that hydrogenation of oils does not help in any way and there is world-wide move to promote consumption of liquid oils;

(c) whether the hydrogenation also involves the use of nickle which is an avoidable risk in edible foods like vanaspati; and

(d) whether Government would consider giving assistance/subsidies to actual consumers of liquid vegetable oils?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Hydrogenated vegetable oils have more shelf life than liquid oils. Consume/ have already shifted to liquid oils, increasingly.

(c) Yes, Sir. Nickel is used as a catalyst to accelerate the reaction of hydrogenation which cannot be avoided.

(d) Govt, has already exempted excise duty on liquid vegetable oils.

Commission to fair price shops

3615. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that State Governments are giving different commisison to the fair price shops, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) what are the rates of commission in each State regarding sugar, edible oil, wheat and rice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) The retailers' commission on PDS commodities are decided by the State Governments. The Central Government does not recommend the rate of Commission to be paid to the fair price shops on the sale of edible oils, wheat and rice and the information on exact margins allowed by different States is not maintained by the Ministry. In the case of levy sugar, however, the margins payable to wholesalers and retailers for distribution of levy sugar are fixed as per the standardised norms laid down in 1989. Margins so fixed for levy surgar are revised periodically by Central Govt, on receipt of specifc proposals from the State Governments. Apart from the cash margins allowed to the fair price shops, they are also allowed to retain the realisation from the sale of empty gunny bags. For levy surgar, they are also given transport charges depending on load, type of terrain and prevailing rate per kilo metre per quintal approved by the State Government.

Strengthening of public distribution system

3616. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the recommendations made at the 14th meeting of the PDS